

16/03948/OUT – 94 Dwellings on Land West of Church Road, Long Hanborough

Putting this application in context, Long Hanborough today has around 1100 homes. In the last few years there has been a deluge of planning applications for developments in excess of 50 homes. Three schemes totalling 339 homes have already received consent with an application awaiting determination for a further 170 homes north of the Witney Road plus of course this present application. A potential increase in size of around 55%.

By now members will be well aware of the issues Long Hanborough faces as a result of this speed of growth. I will not repeat points made previously but simply concentrate on specifics relating to this application.

There is almost universal agreement that the A4095 operates above capacity during rush hours. OCC Highways have registered an objection based on the unreliability of traffic modelling estimates.

One further point is that the applicant's data suggests that at peak periods this project will increase traffic on Church Road by 30% and, taken in conjunction with traffic generated by the consented development of 50 homes on the opposite side of the road, the overall increase will be around 50%. In the morning peak hours the majority of this traffic will head north along this minor road, in order to access the A4095 at the traffic island. As this traffic will have right of way over that coming from the direction of Witney it will certainly increase queuing.

The rapid growth of the village will undoubtedly put pressure on local services, especially the school and surgery.

Current thoughts are that the school will need to be expanded onto its present playing field which will be relocated. Everything is at a preliminary stage, designs have to be produced and planning permission sought. Even so the extended school, whenever it comes to fruition, will be on a cramped site. Once again it will be future children who inherit the consequences.

Another developer, Pye Homes, are committed to replace the surgery with one to be built at the edge of the village. All that exists is outline consent with no further details available. Its capacity is crucial. Is it feasible that this developer will build one of sufficient size to cope with demand arising from all the other schemes competing for the same market when they have made no financial contribution to its cost?

Finally the site itself. It has not been identified as suitable in the SHLAA or its revision. To the north and east, steep banks separate it from the village and Church Road. They are a strong, defined boundary and also an SSSI of national importance. Any housing built beneath these banks on a green field site will be incongruous, subject to flooding and erode the gap between Church Hanborough and Freeland.

For these reasons please vote to accept the officer's recommendation to refuse.

Spoken Presentation on behalf of Hanborough Parish Council regarding Planning Application No.16/03948/OUT, for up to 94 dwellings west of Church Road.

The applicant characterises this site as “valley land” that hardly deserves to be considered as countryside, since recreational walkers are “seldom out of view to or from existing housing;” it is allegedly “overgrown” and has “mixed commercial uses to the south-east at the Piggeries.” I hope members will have seen for themselves that it is in fact mainly idyllic pasture grazed by horses.

The applicant’s proposal is a visually intrusive development in an open and sensitive landscape character area, eroding gaps between settlements, destroying the integrity of well-defined green edges to the village; disrespecting its scale, pattern and character, and failing to integrate well with its existing built form.

As submitted, the application would damage or destroy some of the features for which this Site of Special Scientific Interest has been notified. Experts differ about whether an acceptable level of damage limitation could be achieved through mitigation measures.

County Highways’ officer clearly states that the traffic generated by this development would have a severe impact on the A4095 junction with Church Road; he predicts a 17% worsening of delay at this critical pinch point on the road network which, he says, would be unacceptable and a reason for refusal according to the NPPF. This is the first time in many years that Highways have recognised the cumulative traffic problems experienced in Hanborough to the extent that they have objected.

We wish that the County officer responsible for commenting on educational provision had shown similar clarity, by objecting outright to overcrowding of our primary school. Instead, she has declared “willing not to object” if there is a strict condition preventing occupation of new houses until the school’s ability to expand has been confirmed. How bad would the school’s capacity problems have to be, in order to justify leaving houses unoccupied?

To protect Hanborough’s natural border and the SSSI, to prevent our villages and an important traffic artery from being hopelessly clogged during peak hours, and to avoid our primary school falling far below national play space standards, the Parish Council respectfully asks for Uplands Planning Committee to refuse this application.

This is a para 55 application to build our new home to a Passivhouse PLUS standard

We have lived in Enstone area for four years - our sons attend a local primary school

Para 55 sets a high bar. With its 4 key tests, it was established to raise standards, generally in rural areas, including enhancing sites' immediate setting while being sensitive to the local area.

We have long held an ambition to build our own home. When we happened upon the quarry, on a dog walk, we felt strongly that the it presented an opportunity to create something very special.

The nature of the site required a bold and innovative response. Para 55 is a demanding path. So we are pleased that, after 18 months of rigorous scrutiny, the proposal is deemed to, I QUOTE, "*fully meet all the tests of Paragraph 55 of the NPPF....*", by Design South East's independent Review Panel.

To explain

DSE is the specialist organisation that covers Oxfordshire for Para 55 review.

Their Review Panel, which comprises leading architects, landscape architects, and sustainability specialists all with significant experience in vetting para 55 applications undertook an impartial and rigorous assessment of the proposal.

The Panel review process was attended by WODC planning officers.

Please note that ALL planning officer recommendations are incorporated into the application. The planning officer report, that a PH only standard is not innovative, this scheme is PH **PLUS** a much higher bar. In fact, the highest bar!

We undertook presentations and consultations with Enstone Parish Council – who have confirmed no objection, in fact we received very encouraging feedback during the meetings.

In Summary

Working with S+S architects, specialists in Para 55 and PH, we have created this proposal for your consideration today.

KEY MERITS

- Outstanding Architecture that fits and follows existing topography - 60% of the house is contained in the quarry
- It incorporates the best of modern technology and environmental sensitivity

Some key updates since the Officer's Committee Report was issued to you, also covered in our letter of 1st June.

- The section "1.3 Architect response" pre-dates the Review Panel's final report of 31 May. In the Review Panel report, in addition to unequivocally confirming the passing of all 4 para 55 tests, it provided additional context as to how the proposal met the Para 55 test of "significantly enhancing the immediate setting".

Quoting directly:

"we assessed the qualities of the existing site, both in ecology and landscape terms, and concluded that there was considerable scope for the proposal to significantly enhance it's immediate setting. The poor general condition of the site, plus the removal of the 15m telecommunications tower were both seen as positive aspects of reusing the site for the development of a new home."

On a separate matter. I must also address the CPRE (Oxfordshire Branch) consultation response:

- It was rapidly issued and is factually inaccurate, to highlight just a few items - comments about ecology and lighting are simply wrong, as are statements relating to scale and para 55 qualification. DSE are the para 55 subject matter experts.

In Conclusion

- As confirmed by the Independent and impartial Design Review Panel
...[the] *proposal fully meets all the tests of Paragraph 55 of the NPPF*

- Approach is considered and sensitive to the locality. The Planning Officers' report states it would bring "interest" to the landscape.
 - Enstone Parish Council has no objections
 - Neighbour consultation – 2 positive responses received
 - No 3rd party letters of objection

- The scheme demonstrates the highest standards of Architecture, Innovation and Efficiency

Appreciate that Para 55 is not a typical planning application so both I and the architects S+S are happy to answer any technical or questions of detail you may have today.

Appendix D

The applicant thanked Members for taking the time to conduct a site visit prior to determining the application.

The ridgeline of the building would not exceed that of the current derelict agricultural building and, given the semi subterranean form of the proposed extension, the development would not give rise to harm to the AONB.

The applicant expressed the hope that Members would feel able to approve the application.

- Good Afternoon, my name is Hannah Smart, I am the Urban Design Associate at West Waddy ADP and have acted for Pye Homes in the development of this site for the last 3 years.
- I would firstly like to thank the members and the chair for allowing me this opportunity to address yourselves this afternoon.
- After the granting of outline planning permission, we have worked extensively with your Officers to develop a design solution for the site that fully takes on board the Officers comments and those of the Planning Inspector.

- We have also considered carefully those comments of the Parish Council within the scheme before you today.

- In preparing the final design, we have worked at length to address the following key areas which are critical to ensuring that this development creates an outstanding place and a contemporary addition to the growth of Long Hanborough;

1. The creation of a green landscaped gateway into the development from the Witney Road, providing a landscape setting for the GP Surgery and

introducing a pair of landmark buildings set back behind the GP Surgery which announce the gateway to the residential development.

2. A development with a strong architectural concept, providing a transition from a more traditional historic core adjoining Hurdeswell to a contemporary twist as the development moves away from the existing edge of the settlement.

3. The development provides a number of key landmark buildings through out – to create views and frame important space and a suite of new contemporary designed housetypes – the Milton,

the Thornbury and the Southmoor.

4. A new east to west high quality landscape corridor connects the woodland strip to the north of Hurdeswell with the wider countryside to the west.

This woodland belt also provides an integral green space giving views of green areas for as many homes as possible.

5. A generous green planted buffer to the western boundary feeds into substantial public open green spaces, softening this side of the development and drawing the countryside into the site.

6. A network of connected pedestrian routes linking together the key destinations, streets and open spaces in a clear and legible way which is easy for pedestrians to navigate.

- Considering these design principles, your Officers conclude that the scheme is acceptable having had due regard to the Inspectors comments and those comments of Officers.

- We believe that this development will not only bring substantial benefits to the village in terms of much needed market and affordable housing but also a significant benefit to health facilities creating an exemplary place to live for many generations to come.
- Thank you for listening and providing me with the opportunity to explain the extensive positive benefits of this development.

Appendix F

Good afternoon Mr Chair and learn'd members of the committee.

I'm Mike Hughes from 24 The Slade, I am here again because I am just desperate to defend my families right to home privacy from this proposal, on grounds of being overlooked, and it being overbearing. The applicant's agent bends important details to suit their case; having previously asserted at length the distances as no issue in the rejected application on this land, when of course everyone found they were.

This time, they again say the distances are sufficient, overstating our garden length by nearly 100% and including this inaccuracies in to the measurements you've just heard. Last time I was here I tried to show the lady agent scale drawings of this, to show her their overestimates of my garden, she wasn't interested saying 'nothing you can show me will change my opinion'. Instead of being minded to understand their measuring error they will again present 'alterative facts' that there's no impact to my privacy. Well they would, wouldn't they?

And so what impact on my privacy? There's not any meaningful reduction in glazing and windows now sit parallel with my bedrooms. Someone could stand at the bottom of this new garden and look straight in to my bedroom windows. The entire rear of my house will be overlooked, every single rear window will have a line of sight in to it. I'm not sure what a privacy concern in planning law could be, if not this?

And what about the overbearing impact? While these properties are further back they are also further up the hill, and they are taller than those their earlier rejected application, so being higher up the hill, and taller, surely that is more overbearing that before? They will absolutely dominate our property, towering high above us, looming over on the higher ground.

The increased height even of a 1 storey development standing some 4m higher than our ground floor will be overbearing, let alone a 1.5 storey one.

Clearly this conflicts with BE2 and H2 of the 2011 Plan by creating unacceptable living conditions for residents, for my family.

And then if we think of H2, and similarly OS2 of the emerging document then you'll recognise that you must refuse planning.

LAND AT THE SLADE, CHARLBURY PLANNING COMMITTEE PRESENTATION 5th JUNE 2017

1. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.
2. As members will be aware the application follows a previous application for 5 dwellings which was refused, the key reason being the impact on the amenity of properties fronting The Slade.
3. The current scheme has responded to the previous refusal reason by increasing the separation distance between the proposed properties and those properties fronting The Slade – notable numbers 26 and 24.
4. As identified by your officers a back to back separation distance of 21m is considered a rule of thumb. This distance is not meant to negate all intervisibility between properties but is considered the rule of thumb for when the degree of overlooking is acceptable. I accept that regard must also be had to the topography of the site.
5. In this case the separation has now been increased to over 40m double the rule of thumb and this is to have regard to the previous concerns and the site levels.
6. As can be seen on the site plan and section drawing the proposed dwellings and their gardens do not now abut existing properties along The Slade but part of the existing field remains in between.
7. This redesign has also allowed for new landscaping along the rear boundaries of Plots 1 and 2 – which will comprise a hedge and tree planting and which will provide a further visual screen to the new dwellings and their gardens.
8. Approval of these landscaping details will be subject to a condition, the land being within the applicant's control. If the Council so desires additional landscaping to the rear of properties 1 and 2 can be provided to further mitigate visual impact from existing properties.

9. On behalf of the applicant I now consider the revised design has adequately taken account of previous concerns relating to overbearing and overlooking impacts. I note that your officers agree.
10. As this appears to be the only remaining issue to resolve, if you as the Committee disagree, I would respectfully ask the application is deferred to allow further discussions to resolve any concerns.
11. The applicant is willing to consider further amendments to the design of plots 1 and 2 to further reduce any perception of overlooking or overbearing of properties on The Slade. Such amendments may include for example:
- Additional landscaping to the rear of Plots 1 and 2;
 - Reducing the rear projections to single storey;
 - Further lowering roof heights and incorporating roof lights to the rear elevations facing properties on The Slade rather than upper floor windows;
 - Reorientating Plots 1 and 2 so that gable ends with limited openings such as obscured bathroom windows are presented to properties on The Slade.
12. If any concern remains, I think an acceptable solution can be found and I would ask that members defer the application to the next committee to allow further discussions.